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Transition Years

Grades 7, 8, and 9

Policies and Program Requirements

1992





Cette publication est également offerte en français sous le titre suivant : *Les années de transition : 7^e, 8^e et 9^e années. Directives et modalités d'application, 1992.*

Introduction

This policy document, *Transition Years, Grades 7, 8, and 9*, is to be used in conjunction with *The Common Curriculum, Grades 1 to 9* in developing and implementing the new curriculum in Ontario schools.

Transition Years, Grades 7, 8, and 9 shall supersede the policies in *Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions (OSIS)*¹ that apply to Grades 7, 8, and 9.

1. Ministry of Education, Ontario, *Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Grades 7-12/OACs: Program and Diploma Requirements*, rev. ed. (Toronto: Ministry of Education, Ontario, 1989).

1. The Program in the Transition Years

1.1 The program for students in Grades 7, 8, and 9 shall be based on the learning outcomes described in *The Common Curriculum, Grades 1 to 9*. This program shall be a comprehensive program that ensures that all of the learning outcomes specified for the four core program areas – Language, Arts, Self and Society, and Mathematics, Science, and Technology – can be achieved.

Implementation of the program for Grades 7 and 8, which shall be based on the learning outcomes and reflect an integrated approach to learning, shall be phased in over three years beginning in September 1993.

Implementation of the program for Grade 9, which shall be based on the learning outcomes, shall be phased in over three years beginning in September 1993. Although the learning outcomes are organized within four broad areas, schools need not organize their programs in this manner. Schools wishing to deliver programs organized according to distinct subjects are permitted to do so.

Ministry curriculum guidelines for Grades 7, 8, and 9 that have been developed under OSIS may be used as resource documents.

1.2 School boards, sections, and schools shall develop a three-year plan for the implementation of the Transition Years program. The plan should consist of a coherent phase-in strategy that will ensure complete implementation of the new curriculum by September 1, 1996. It should also include provision for in-service professional development for teachers to ensure that all staff members are prepared to implement the new curriculum.

1.3 Effective September 1, 1993, minimum amounts of instructional time for study areas in Grades 7 and 8, which are stated in section 3.4 of OSIS, are no longer applicable. These will be replaced by requirements for the Transition Years, which are stated as learning outcomes in *The Common Curriculum, Grades 1 to 9*.

Minimum amounts of instructional time are required for funding purposes for programs in French as a second language and Native as a second language, and are outlined in sections 4.1 and 4.5, respectively.

1.4 The Grade 9 program shall not be organized into credit-bearing courses.

1.5 Principals shall determine the equivalent credit value of the school's Grade 9 program as a whole and shall also determine the remaining requirements – that is, compulsory and elective credits – for an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). In doing so, the principal shall ensure that the overall graduation requirements are equivalent to those specified in section 4.10 of OSIS. This is only an interim policy to allow the Grade 9 program to be included as part of the thirty-credit graduation requirement.

1.6 In Grades 7 and 8, the curriculum shall reflect an integrated approach to learning and shall focus on the interrelationships among the core program areas. Although some learning activities may be organized according to traditional subject areas, the program must be organized in such a way that the interrelationships among subjects and topics are evident and meaningful to the student.

1.7 Schools shall provide locally designed optional units or activities in each year of the Transition Years program. All students should be allowed to make choices that will broaden their range of interests and increase their level of competence. The optional units or activities should be developed with the collaboration of parents, teachers, and other members of the community. These optional units or activities must also be based on the learning outcomes specified in *The Common Curriculum, Grades 1 to 9*.

In some cases, schools may provide specialized programs within one or more of the four core program areas to allow students to broaden and deepen their learning in a particular area. Such programs must also be based on the learning outcomes specified in *The Common Curriculum, Grades 1 to 9*.

1.8 Career education that combines development of personal awareness with educational planning shall be part of each core program area and shall involve not only guidance teachers but all teachers of the Transition Years program. One of the purposes of the new curriculum in the Transition Years is to provide students with the foundations for making decisions about future educational and career opportunities as well as decisions about their personal life.

1.9 Schools shall help students to learn to use a wide variety of resources to obtain information. Opportunities should be made available for students to acquire the knowledge and skills required to use resource centres effectively and for students to use a variety of information technologies in the process of learning.

2. School Organization for the Transition Years

2.1 Beginning in September 1993, the organization of classes in Grades 7, 8, and 9 shall not be determined according to perceived student ability, and the program in Grade 9 shall not be organized according to levels of difficulty. Schools shall provide for heterogeneous and flexible groupings of students within classes and shall ensure that all students have an opportunity to achieve the learning outcomes specified in *The Common Curriculum, Grades 1 to 9*. These requirements do not preclude setting up groupings for such purposes as remediation, accommodation of special interests, and extension of the core program, so long as such arrangements remain a small proportion of any student's total timetable.

2.2 The needs of exceptional pupils shall continue to be met. Existing policies for all exceptional pupils shall remain in effect until new policies are in place.

2.3 In each year of the Transition Years program, each student should have a mentor or adviser who will be available to the student over a full school year and whom the student can consult on a regular basis.

3. Assessment and Evaluation in the Transition Years

3.1 Each school shall establish an evaluation policy that is clearly based on provincial expectations for student progress in all of the core program areas. This evaluation policy will also enable each student and his or her parents and teachers to share the responsibility for making decisions about the student's future educational program.

3.2 The assessment and evaluation of a student's achievement and the reports to parents shall be based upon the student's progress in achieving the learning outcomes specified for the core program areas in *The Common Curriculum, Grades 1 to 9*. In accordance with the ministry's emphasis on accountability, schools are required to assess and evaluate student achievement and programs in order to determine whether students are achieving the prescribed learning outcomes and whether the school is providing students with the help they need to achieve the outcomes. Learning outcomes and related assessment and evaluation strategies should be clearly outlined, a method for accumulating student assessments established, and procedures for reporting to students and parents developed. Schools must use a variety of assessment and evaluation strategies that are appropriate for the evaluation of student achievement of the various types of learning outcomes.

Schools must ensure that assessment and evaluation strategies are free from bias based on gender, race, ethnicity, creed, disability, or social class.

4. Second-Language Programs in the Transition Years

4.1 French-as-a-second-language (FSL) programs in English-language schools shall be based on the learning outcomes specified in *The Common Curriculum, Grades 1 to 9*. Principals should also refer to Policy/Program Memorandum No. 58, "Elementary School Core French Programs".

Federal and provincial formulae for funding FSL will continue to be calculated by minutes per day of instructional time. The required number of hours to be accumulated by the end of the Transition Years in each type of FSL program is given in the chart below.

Type of FSL program	Hours accumulated by the end of the Transition Years	Other conditions pertaining to Grade 9
Core French	720 hours of French instruction	a minimum of 110 hours of French instruction
Extended French	1500 hours of instruction with French as the language of instruction	a minimum of 25 per cent of the instructional time with French as the language of instruction
Immersion French	4160 hours of instruction with French as the language of instruction	a minimum of 40 per cent of the instructional time with French as the language of instruction

4.2 Anglais/English programs in French-language schools shall be based on the learning outcomes specified in *The Common Curriculum, Grades 1 to 9*. Principals should use the ministry's curriculum guideline *Anglais/English, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, 1985* as a resource in planning the Anglais/English program.

4.3 English-as-a-second-language (ESL) programs in English-language schools may be provided by school boards and sections to meet student needs. This provision is intended for learners whose first language is neither English nor French. Principals should use the curriculum guideline *English As a Second Language and English Skills Development, Intermediate and Senior Divisions*, 1988 as a resource in planning the ESL program.

As of September 1, 1993, principals shall include consideration of ESL programs when determining the equivalent credit value of the Grade 9 program.

4.4 Programs in Francisation in French-language schools may be provided by school boards and sections to enable students to develop the necessary competence to function well in a French-language school. This provision is intended for students, whether born in Canada or not, who have not yet acquired full fluency in French, but who have the right to attend a French-language school.

As of September 1, 1993, principals shall include consideration of Francisation programs when determining the equivalent credit value of the Grade 9 program.

4.5 Native-as-a-second-language (NSL) programs shall be offered as a regular part of the curriculum when the conditions are met that are outlined in Policy/Program Memorandum No. 110, "Interrelationships of Native-As-a-Second-Language (NSL) and French-As-a-Second-Language (FSL) Programs". These programs shall be based on the learning outcomes specified in *The Common Curriculum, Grades 1 to 9*. Principals should use the curriculum guideline *Native Languages, Part A: Policy and Program Considerations*, 1987 as a resource in planning the NSL program.

Funding for NSL programs will continue to be based on minutes of instruction per day. Students in an NSL program in the Transition Years shall receive a minimum of 40 minutes of instruction per day.

As of September 1, 1993, principals shall include consideration of NSL programs when determining the equivalent credit value of the Grade 9 program.

4.6 Heritage language programs shall be offered in Grades 7 and 8 as part of the continuing education program, where the conditions that are outlined in Policy/Program Memorandum No. 7 ("Heritage Languages Program") are met.

5.

Adult Students in the Transition Years

Principals shall continue to be responsible for determining the appropriate placement for each adult returning to school in the Transition Years at a day school as a full-time or part-time student, in a continuing education program, or in programs offered through the Independent Learning Centre.

Equivalent-credit allowances in the form of maturity allowance and equivalent-education allowance shall continue to apply to secondary school programs and may include the equivalent credit value of part or all of the Grade 9 program (see section 1.5).

Principals are expected to assess the degree to which an adult has achieved the learning outcomes described in *The Common Curriculum, Grades 1 to 9*. In doing so, they may:

- formally recognize other equally valid knowledge and skills that the adult learner has previously developed;
- recommend placement in a program beyond Grade 9, if they are satisfied that the adult has acquired the necessary knowledge and skills;
- recommend an alternative learning program that should enable the adult to achieve the knowledge and skills that he or she lacks.

All adult students shall receive in writing the principal's assessment and recommendations. This information shall also be placed in the student's Ontario Student Record.

6.

Programs Dealing With Religion in the Transition Years

6.1

Policy/Program Memorandum No. 112, "Education About Religion in the Public Elementary and Secondary Schools", shall continue to be the policy document covering education about religion in the public elementary and secondary schools of Ontario.

As of September 1, 1993, principals may include consideration of programs in education about religion when determining the equivalent credit value of the Grade 9 program.

6.2 Roman Catholic separate school boards are responsible for their own religious education programs.

As of September 1, 1993, principals of Roman Catholic secondary schools may include consideration of religious education programs when determining the equivalent credit value of the Grade 9 program.



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